



The first two bone marrow transplant patients arrive at BAMC 6 West from Wilford Hall Medical Center on June 22 as part of the BRAC process.

Photo by Susan A. Merkner

First bone marrow transplant patients arrive at BAMC from WHMC

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San Antonio Medical BRAC Public Affairs

Inpatient bone marrow transplant and inpatient hematology and oncology services relocated to Brooke Army Medical Center from Wilford Hall Medical Center effective June 22.

The move was another step toward meeting the Base Realignment and Closure deadline of Sept. 15 for realigning inpatient services from Wilford Hall to BAMC.

On the morning of June 22, two patients were transported by ambulance from Wilford Hall to renovated patient rooms on BAMC's 6 West floor. Staff assigned to the patients greeted them with welcoming comments and helped them settle into their new rooms.

The bone marrow transplant (BMT) unit's transitional space includes five renovated patient rooms and a treatment room. The 25 other beds on 6 West are designated as a medical ward and can be adapted to accommodate additional BMT patients, if needed.

The BMT unit's permanent home will be a state-of-the-art, 14-bed unit on the fifth floor of the newly constructed Consolidated Tower.

The Department of Defense BMT program began in 1985 at Wilford Hall. When the new BAMC hospital opened in 1996, it also had a bone marrow transplant unit. Between 1996 and 2001, 497 patients were treated in the BAMC BMT unit. The BMT unit was consolidated into the BMT unit at WHMC in 2001 to reduce costs and increase efficiency in the San Antonio military medical community.

Bone marrow transplants are used to treat various cancers and certain noncancerous diseases.

Because patients who undergo chemotherapy or a bone marrow transplant may have compromised immune systems, their hospital surroundings are strictly managed to prevent infection.

The BMT patient rooms on 6 West are outfitted with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters to keep the air constantly in motion.

During recent BRAC-related transitions locally, beds are closing through attrition at Wilford Hall, and new patients are being admitted to newly opened beds at BAMC.

Outpatient clinics move

The outpatient bone marrow transplant clinic also relocated to BAMC from Wilford Hall, effective June 21. The outpatient BMT clinic is in D Lot Clinic 12, accessible outside the hospital's women's health clinic entrance.

BAMC's adult outpatient hematology/oncology clinic moved to transitional space within the Wilford Hall hematology/oncology unit in September 2007 and is scheduled to return to BAMC in August.

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